

Magazine Feature Section

BISMARCK'S SPIRIT GOES MARCHING ON

Memory and Example of the Iron Chancellor a Most Potent Influence In Inspiring the Soldiers In the German Trenches

Replied to a telegram from the Imperial Chancellor, on the celebration of the anniversary of Bismarck's birthday, the emperor sent the following dispatch from army headquarters:

"Your message concerning the stirring celebration in honor of Bismarck has rejoiced me greatly. I would with great pleasure attend personally to do homage to the great chancellor, and lay on the steps of the monument, amidst the representatives of the empire and the people, a token of my reverence for a man, who in this present earnest time is especially dear to us at the personification of German strength and determination, but my duty to the armed German people is to hold out in the field in order to protect and strengthen the empire's power abroad.

"We shall succeed. Our guarantee is, firstly, God's grace; secondly, the unanimous will to achieve victory, which inspires us all, and our solemn vow to make every sacrifice for the fatherland, which has been tested by facts.

"The spirit of unity which has enabled our men in the battlefield to overcome everything that divided us will, I confidently hope, outlast the din of war, and after victory has been gained will rightly bless and promote the internal development of the empire.

"Then, as the fruit of victory, rational life will spring up, in which the German nationality will have full and free expansion. Then the proud work for which Bismarck laid the foundation will be crowned."

Bismarck.

The name of that great conqueror now is ringing through Germany and the echo is being heard in the trenches and among other fighting forces and renewing in them a determination to conquer or die.

As the singing of America inspires Americans so the mention of the name of the great Bismarck excites the pitch of German patriotism to the highest degree and sends to those sufferers in the trenches new hope and courage in their fight.

"We shall emulate Bismarck and conquer," remarked the kaiser. "We shall do like Bismarck and conquer," answered millions of people in the empire and this cry was taken up and reverberated through the trenches of the German army as no slogan had ever been taken up before.

THE SPIRIT OF UNITY.

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The words of the kaiser rang through Germany as nothing of a patriotic nature had done since the beginning of the war. It is well to preach to men suffering in the trenches the glory of the fatherland. The Germans, it is said, have a greater love for their fatherland than any other nation. But with empty stomach and frozen feet, with bullets sailing above one's head and no expectancy of the future other than merciful death by a bullet, the talk of patriotism often has a hollow sound and does not win the cheers that it would when war was first declared.

Yet when the name of Bismarck was mentioned on the centennial anniversary of his birth it ran through the German Empire like wild-fire. Citizens were inspired and the enthusiasm was still more strongly felt by the men in the trenches or in the navy.

Truly they were fighting for their fatherland, for their homes and children. But homes and fatherland are remote considerations when one is freezing and half fed in a trench. More truly they were fighting for the great kaiser whom all respected and loved. When the kaiser in his declaration to his people signified that he intended to emulate Bismarck and conquer as he did it was to the German army as if the great Iron Chancellor rode into their midst on his steel gray horse and took personal charge with the kaiser over their operations. Strength that had been forgotten, courage and determination to win that had been almost lost sight of in anxiety to return home, were restored in a day and the troops in the trenches and sailors of battle-

ships and submarines swore they would emulate the example of the brave troops of Bismarck and win or die.

In Berlin there was a great celebration. The whole city was a veritable blaze of color with flags floating everywhere, bands playing and people cheering madly. Guns were fired from the garrison, the reserves marched forth in their best uniforms and the people in a frenzy of rejoicing over the birth of one of the greatest German leaders hugged and kissed each other on the street.

Thousands of residents of Berlin gathered about Bismarck's heroic statue before the Reichstag to observe the exercises. Promptly at noon the imperial chancellor, Dr. von Bethmann-Hollweg, followed by all the generals and admirals not at the front, the official members of the Reichstag and Prussian chambers, Prince Otto Bismarck's grandson, and the civic authorities of greater Berlin, advanced to the monument from the Reichstag and decorated it with wreaths from the emperor and from many individuals and organizations.

The emperor was officially represented at the ceremony in the morning by the 9-year-old son of the crown prince, the boy wearing a sailor's uniform. All of the nobility attended and knelt in homage before the statue of the great Bismarck and then deposited their offerings of flowers.

The United States has its George Washington, France its Napoleon and England its Wellington, and so Germany has its Bismarck, the mention of whose name sends the blood pulsing through the arteries of its soldiers and makes them resolve to do or die.

KAISER AND CHANCELLOR.

"The kaiser and Bismarck," is now the cry echoing through the trenches.

Why Bismarck so particularly appeals to the German race at this time is that he stormed Paris and made it surrender in the Franco-German war of 1870 and 1871. At that time Napoleon III. had viewed the growth of Prussia under the able statesmanship of Count von Bismarck with open distrust. The emperor of the French had long foreseen that a conflict between France and Prussia was inevitable, and Bismarck was well convinced that the unity of Germany could not be accomplished without a struggle with France, whose traditional policy toward Germany at that time was a desire for a boundary on the Rhine.

In August, 1866, Napoleon III. demanded the cession of the German territory on the west side of the Rhine to France as a compensation for the increased power of Prussia. In reply to the French emperor's demand Bismarck pronounced it "inadmissible." Then Count Benedetti, representing Napoleon III., presented to Bismarck a plan where it (France) was to annex Belgium and in return was to aid Prussia in the conquest of South Germany.

After the failure of this and several other diplomatic coups France began the mobilization of its army on the grounds that Prussia was entering into an intrigue by permitting Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen to become the candidate for the Spanish throne. The Prince, announcing he did not wish to become the cause of a European conflict, withdrew. The king of Prussia had sanctioned and advised the withdrawal, but France demanded that he take this action as the king of Prussia which he declined to do on the ground it was not consistent with the dignity of Prussia.

At this juncture Count Bismarck rushed troops to the Rhine and aroused the world by his publication of the proposal of France to permit it to annex Belgium. Great Britain demanded of France that it adopt a policy of "hands off" in regard to Belgium. France renewed its demands on the Prussian emperor. The Prussian troops under Count von Moltke then moved toward France while the French troops marched under Napoleon III.

In July, 1870, the German troops, 700,000 in number, occupied a line along the French frontier from the Moselle to the Rhine, a position in which the first troops of the present war arranged themselves for the attack on Paris that never matured.

The Crown Prince Frederick William with a small force engaged the French in two battles in which he was successful. The French lost 11,000 men in the latter battle—that of Worth. These defeats caused intense excitement in Paris. The Parisians became indignant and threat-

ened mutiny while the government to allay their wrath printed bulletins saying the crown prince of Prussia had been defeated. When it was learned these bulletins were false the anger of the mobs in Paris was increased the more.

On the first day of September of 1870, the famous battle of Sedan was fought between the victorious crown prince's troops and those of MacMahon, the French leader. The morning was devoted to exchange of artillery fire, but toward noon the Prussians made a fierce attack on the French center, but were repulsed. Then followed an infantry attack along the whole line in which the French lines were broken and their troops compelled to flee. The victory was more disastrous to the Prussians, however, for they lost 30,000 men and the French but 2,000 men. At dark the French took refuge in the fortress of Sedan and on the second of September, 1870, the siege of that stronghold started. The French, however, were so beleaguered that Emperor Napoleon III. surrendered himself to King William of Prussia and MacMahon's army also was surrendered.

The German armies marched rapidly toward France's capital and on September 4 the city of Paris was in a state of siege. At that time the French minister, Favre, offered humiliating terms of peace, but Count von Bismarck who had been directing the great forces in their march toward France's capital, demanded the cession of Alsace and Lorraine and even demanded the cession of a permanent government in France, which was refused.

An army of a half million men at that time surrounded Paris. There were but 230,000 troops defending the fortresses of the beleaguered capital. Numerous engagements of an unimportant character happened about Paris. All communication between this great city and the outer world had been cut off. Paris then sent up balloons with messages to the army of the Vosges which was commanded by General Garibaldi. There also was a new army of the Loire and the two offered great possibilities of coming to the aid of the besieged city. The Germans were successful in attacks on various other strongholds and the southern German states entered into an alliance with Prussia that resulted in the formation of the German Empire.

Having grown impatient at the lengthy duration of the siege of Paris, the Germans determined to compel the capital to surrender by assault and bombardment. In the latter part of December, 1870, the besiegers opened a heavy bombardment on Fort Avron and the fort was evacuated and occupied by German troops. The forts on the east and south sides of Paris were bombarded so vigorously that some of them were at length silenced, but they again resumed fire and re-

plied as vigorously as before. Both the French and German armies suffered much from the severity of the season. Count von Bismarck was on the scene directing the troops and increased the courage of his men under the circumstances that confronted them.

Thousands of shells from the German guns fell in Paris, doing much damage and killing hundreds of people. Many skirmishes then occurred and one French general was repulsed with a loss of 3,000 men. On the 6th of January the Prussian troops under Prince Frederick Charles routed the army of the Loire, which was on its way to aid and give relief in the defense of Paris. Twenty-two thousand French were captured by the Prussians. The French army of the north also was repulsed and all hope for raising the siege of Paris was abandoned by the auxiliary

forces.

At length after the French capital had suffered terribly from the fierce bombardment by the Germans, and after famine had wrought its horrors on the inhabitants of the beleaguered city the besieged made proposals of surrender and on January 28, 1871, the articles of capitulation were signed by which the city of Paris was surrendered to the Germans and its garrison of 185,000 men under General Trochu became prisoners of war.

The Germans levied a contribution of 20,000,000 francs upon the conquered city and the forts around the city were immediately occupied by German garrisons. Measures were taken for the revictualing of the city under German supervision. For several weeks after the surrender hundreds of Parisians died daily of starvation. The fall of Paris opened the eyes of the French gov-



A SOLDIER'S FAREWELL

ernment and people to the hopelessness of resistance to the gigantic power of Germany and made them anxious for the speedy conclusion of peace.

An armistice of three weeks was signed at Versailles on January 28 by Jules Favre on the part of the French Republic, and Prince Bismarck on the part of the German Empire. In order to allow the French people to elect representatives to a national assembly which would convene at Bordeaux and ratify a treaty of peace with Germany.

After much negotiations, the armistice in the meantime having been extended one week, a preliminary treaty of peace was signed by President Thiers and Jules Favre on the part of the French Republic and Prince von Bismarck on the part of the German Empire. France was required to cede to Germany nearly the whole of Alsace, including Strassbourg, and one-fifth of Lorraine, including Metz, and to pay a billion dollars in three years

as indemnity for the losses sustained by Germany in the war. A large portion of the German army was to garrison a number of the French fortresses until the entire indemnity was paid. The expenses supporting this army of occupation to be paid by France.

On March 1, 1871, Emperor William of Germany and 30,000 German troops made their grand triumphal entry into the French capital. They made a very orderly entrance and two days later evacuated. Napoleon III. was released to retire in England, where he died two years later.

Thus ended Bismarck's conquest in one of the greatest wars of modern times. Through the whole there was the great brain of the Iron Chancellor directing his men and leading them to victory. That was but 45 years ago and there are men still alive who remember the conquest. The kaiser is believed to have planned a similar siege of Paris in his first move of the present war. Bismarck now is uppermost in the thoughts of the German soldiers.

BISMARCK JUST BEFORE HIS SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY



EMPEROR WILLIAM I